

# Readings Booklet

**June 1998**



# **English 30**

## **Part B: Reading**

### **Grade 12 Diploma Examination**



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**June 1998**

**English 30 Part B: Reading  
Readings Booklet  
Grade 12 Diploma Examination**

***Description***

**Part B: Reading** contributes 50% of the total English 30 Diploma Examination mark.

There are 8 reading selections in the Readings Booklet and 70 questions in the Questions Booklet.

***Time: 2 hours. You may take an additional 1/2 hour to complete the examination.***

***Instructions***

- Be sure that you have an English 30 Readings Booklet **and** an English 30 Questions Booklet.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, thesaurus, or other reference materials.

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I. Questions 1 to 8 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

### FOR THE LOST ADOLESCENT

Even before he left for good I heard things in the fire,  
heard fundamental moaning,  
wind like a shoulder splintering a door.  
I'd say, *Come here*, but he was lost to me.

5 I'd say, *Beloved, bring more wood up from the yard.*  
But he was lost to me,  
locked inside his name, the name itself  
too big a house, or simply wilderness I only glimpsed sometimes.  
And true, those days, looking out of my own eyes

10 I felt some former host behind me,  
some bedrock stare, antediluvian, unchanging.  
And he was horrified to see me watching  
something like birds in the fire,  
not their song but a scratching among rubble.

15 Something like rain then surely rain  
if I shut my eyes.  
Another year, another child,  
this might have been the subject—  
always penultimate,<sup>1</sup> some claim for the beautiful,

20 the conditions of the lie gone up with goodness, all the same,  
log after log, fire after fire, praise beyond pretense  
for so primitive a thing, that first warmth  
ransomed, a captive  
of our need amid the ruin of a modern city!

25 And if I never recognized his voice inside me,  
who could know?  
A mother learns a code of sounds not yet a voice  
and feels her way inside that heat  
and then there's the holding while the world heals

30 or does not heal.  
Life's long with and without him  
where children passing on their way to school  
no longer walk into his body.  
As for their laughter, it's like the laughter in a dream

35 to which the sleeper barely smiles.

*Deborah Digges*  
American poet/educator

<sup>1</sup>penultimate—second from the last

**II. Questions 9 to 16 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a novel.**

**from A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT**

In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing. We lived at the junction of great trout rivers in western Montana, and our father was a Presbyterian minister and a fly fisherman who tied his own flies and taught others. He told us about Christ's disciples being fishermen, and we were left to assume,

5 as my brother and I did, that all first-class fishermen on the Sea of Galilee were fly fishermen and that John, the favorite, was a dry-fly fisherman.

It is true that one day a week was given over wholly to religion. On Sunday mornings my brother, Paul, and I went to Sunday school and then to "morning services" to hear our father preach and in the evenings to Christian Endeavor and

10 afterwards to "evening services" to hear our father preach again. In between on Sunday afternoons we had to study *The Westminster Shorter Catechism*<sup>1</sup> for an hour and then recite before we could walk the hills with him while he unwound between services. But he never asked us more than the first question in the

15 catechism, "What is the chief end of man?" And we answered together so one of us could carry on if the other forgot, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." This always seemed to satisfy him, as indeed such a beautiful answer should have, and besides he was anxious to be on the hills where he could restore his soul and be filled again to overflowing for the evening sermon. His chief way of recharging himself was to recite to us from the sermon

20 that was coming, enriched here and there with selections from the most successful passages of his morning sermon.

Even so, in a typical week of our childhood Paul and I probably received as many hours of instruction in fly fishing as we did in all other spiritual matters.

25 After my brother and I became good fishermen, we realized that our father was not a great fly caster, but he was accurate and stylish and wore a glove on his casting hand. As he buttoned his glove in preparation to give us a lesson, he would say, "It is an art that is performed on a four-count rhythm between ten and two o'clock."

30 As a Scot and a Presbyterian, my father believed that man by nature was a mess and had fallen from an original state of grace.<sup>2</sup> Somehow, I early developed the notion that he had done this by falling from a tree. As for my father, I never knew whether he believed God was a mathematician but he certainly believed God could count and that only by picking up God's rhythms were we able to regain power and beauty. Unlike many Presbyterians, he often used the word

35 "beautiful."

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>Catechism—a book of religious instruction in the form of question and answer

<sup>2</sup>state of grace—a state of favour with God; free from sin

After he buttoned his glove, he would hold his rod straight out in front of him, where it trembled with the beating of his heart. Although it was eight and a half feet long, it weighed only four and a half ounces. It was made of split bamboo cane from the far-off Bay of Tonkin. It was wrapped with red and blue silk thread, and the wrappings were carefully spaced to make the delicate rod powerful but not so stiff it could not tremble.

Always it was to be called a rod. If someone called it a pole, my father looked at him as a sergeant in the United States Marines would look at a recruit who had just called a rifle a gun.

My brother and I would have preferred to start learning how to fish by going out and catching a few, omitting entirely anything difficult or technical in the way of preparation that would take away from the fun. But it wasn't by way of fun that we were introduced to our father's art. If our father had had his say, nobody who did not know how to fish would be allowed to disgrace a fish by catching him. So you too will have to approach the art Marine- and-Presbyterian-style, and, if you have never picked up a fly rod before, you will soon find it factually and theologically true that man by nature is a damn mess. The four-and-a-half-ounce thing in silk wrappings that trembles with the underskin motions of the flesh becomes a stick without brains, refusing anything simple that is wanted of it. All that a rod has to do is lift the line, the leader, and the fly off the water, give them a good toss over the head, and then shoot them forward so they will land in the water without a splash in the following order: fly, transparent leader, and then the line—otherwise the fish will see the fly is a fake and be gone. Of course, there are special casts<sup>3</sup> that anyone could predict would be difficult, and they require artistry—casts where the line can't go over the fisherman's head because cliffs or trees are immediately behind, sideways casts to get the fly under overhanging willows, and so on. But what's remarkable about just a straight cast—just picking up a rod with line on it and tossing the line across the river?

Well, until man is redeemed<sup>4</sup> he will always take a fly rod too far back, just as natural man always overswings with an ax or golf club and loses all his power somewhere in the air; only with a rod it's worse, because the fly often comes so far back it gets caught behind in a bush or rock. When my father said it was an art that ended at two o'clock, he often added, "closer to twelve than to two," meaning that the rod should be taken back only slightly farther than overhead (straight overhead being twelve o'clock).

Then, since it is natural for man to try to attain power without recovering grace, he whips the line back and forth making it whistle each way, and

*Continued*

<sup>3</sup>casts—the throwing out of a fly or artificial bait at the end of a fishing line

<sup>4</sup>redeemed—rescued, saved, liberated by virtue of performance; often used in the sense of spiritual salvation

sometimes even snapping off the fly from the leader, but the power that was going to transport the little fly across the river somehow gets diverted into building a  
75 bird's nest of line, leader, and fly that falls out of the air into the water about ten feet in front of the fisherman. If, though, he pictures the round trip of the line, transparent leader, and fly from the time they leave the water until their return, they are easier to cast. They naturally come off the water heavy line first and in front, and light transparent leader and fly trailing behind. But, as they pass overhead,  
80 they have to have a little beat of time so the light, transparent leader and fly can catch up to the heavy line now starting forward and again fall behind it; otherwise, the line starting on its return trip will collide with the leader and fly still on their way up, and the mess will be the bird's nest that splashes into the water ten feet in front of the fisherman.

85 Almost the moment, however, that the forward order of line, leader, and fly is reestablished, it has to be reversed, because the fly and transparent leader must be ahead of the heavy line when they settle on the water. If what the fish sees is highly visible line, what the fisherman will see are departing black darts, and he might as well start for the next hole. High overhead, then, on the forward cast (at  
90 about ten o'clock) the fisherman checks again.

The four-count rhythm, of course, is functional. The one count takes the line, leader, and fly off the water; the two count tosses them seemingly straight into the sky; the three count was my father's way of saying that at the top the leader and fly have to be given a little beat of time to get behind the line as it is starting  
95 forward; the four count means put on the power and throw the line into the rod until you reach ten o'clock—then check-cast, let the fly and leader get ahead of the line, and coast to a soft and perfect landing. Power comes not from power everywhere, but from knowing where to put it on. "Remember," as my father kept saying, "it is an art that is performed on a four-count rhythm between ten and  
100 two o'clock."

My father was very sure about certain matters pertaining to the universe. To him, all good things—trout as well as eternal salvation—come by grace and grace comes by art and art does not come easy.

So my brother and I learned to cast Presbyterian-style, on a metronome.<sup>5</sup> It  
105 was mother's metronome, which father had taken from the top of the piano in town. She would occasionally peer down to the dock from the front porch of the cabin, wondering nervously whether her metronome could float if it had to. When she became so overwrought that she thumped down the dock to reclaim it, my father would clap out the four-count rhythm with his cupped hands.

*Norman Maclean*  
American writer

<sup>5</sup>metronome—a clockwork device with a pendulum that beats time; used especially for practising piano

**III. Questions 17 to 26 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a play.**

**from THE MATCHMAKER**

**CHARACTERS:**

MR. VANDERGELDER—wealthy merchant of Yonkers, New York

ERMENGARDE—his niece

AMBROSE KEMPER—an artist

MRS. DOLLY LEVI—friend of Ermengarde's mother

Scene: VANDERGELDER'S *house in Yonkers, New York.*

Time: *early 1880s*

ERMENGARDE has consented to marry AMBROSE KEMPER, but MR. VANDERGELDER, because of what he sees as AMBROSE's deplorable lack of prospects, has furiously forbidden the marriage. MR. VANDERGELDER is sending ERMENGARDE away to "get the romance out of her head."

*As this scene opens, VANDERGELDER addresses the audience.*

VANDERGELDER: Ninety-nine per cent of the people in the world are fools and the rest of us are in great danger of contagion. But I wasn't always free of foolishness as I am now. I was once young, which was foolish; I fell in love, which was foolish; and I got married, which was foolish; and for a while I was poor, which was more foolish than all the other things put together. Then my wife died, which was foolish of her; I grew older, which was sensible of me; then I became a rich man, which is as sensible as it is rare. Since you see I'm a man of sense, I guess you were surprised to hear that I'm planning to get married again. Well, I've two reasons for it. In the first place, I like my house run with order, comfort, and economy. That's a woman's work; but even a woman can't do it well if she's merely being paid for it. In order to run a house well, a woman must have the feeling that she owns it. Marriage is a bribe to make a housekeeper think she's a householder. Did you ever watch an ant carry a burden twice its size? What excitement! What patience! What will! Well, that's what I think of when I see a woman running a house. What giant passions in those little bodies—what quarrels with the butcher for the best cut—what fury at discovering a moth in a cupboard! Believe me!—if women could harness their natures to something bigger than a house and a baby carriage—tck! tck!—they'd change the world. And the second reason,

*Continued*

20 ladies and gentlemen? Well, I see by your faces you've guessed it already. There's nothing like mixing with women to bring out all the foolishness in a man of sense. And that's a risk I'm willing to take. I've just turned sixty, and I've just laid side by side the last dollar of my first half million. So if I should lose my head a little, I still have enough money to buy it back. After many  
25 years' caution and hard work, I have earned a right to a little risk and adventure, and I'm thinking of getting married. Yes, like all you other fools, I'm willing to risk a little security for a certain amount of adventure. Think it over. (*Exit back center.* AMBROSE *enters from the street, crosses left, and whistles softly.* ERMENGARDE *enters from left.*)

30 ERMENGARDE: Ambrose! If my uncle saw you!

AMBROSE: Sh! Get your hat.

ERMENGARDE: My hat!

AMBROSE: Quick! Your trunk's at the station. Now quick! We're running away.

35 ERMENGARDE: Running away!

AMBROSE: Sh!

ERMENGARDE: Where?

AMBROSE: To New York. To get married.

ERMENGARDE: Oh, Ambrose, I can't do that. Ambrose dear—it wouldn't be  
40 proper!

AMBROSE: Listen. I'm taking you to my friend's house. His wife will take care of you.

ERMENGARDE: But, Ambrose, a girl can't go on a train with a man. I can see you don't know anything about girls.

45 AMBROSE: But I'm telling you we're going to get married!

ERMENGARDE: Married? But what would Uncle say?

AMBROSE: We don't care what Uncle'd say—we're eloping.

ERMENGARDE: Ambrose Kemper! How can you use such an awful word!

AMBROSE: Ermengarde, you have the soul of a field mouse.

50 ERMENGARDE (*Crying*): Ambrose, why do you say such cruel things to me?  
(*Enter MRS. LEVI, from the street, right. She stands listening.*)

AMBROSE: For the last time I beg you—get your hat and coat. The train leaves in a few minutes. Ermengarde, we'll get married tomorrow....

ERMENGARDE: Oh, Ambrose! I see you don't understand anything about  
55 weddings. Ambrose, don't you respect me?....

MRS. LEVI (*Uncertain age; mass of sandy hair; impoverished elegance; large, shrewd but generous nature, an assumption of worldly cynicism conceals a tireless amused enjoyment of life. She carries a handbag and a small brown paper bag.*): Good morning, darling girl—how are you? (*They kiss.*)

*Continued*

60   **ERMENGARDE:** Oh, good morning, Mrs. Levi.  
**MRS. LEVI:** And who is this gentleman who is so devoted to you?  
**ERMENGARDE:** This is Mr. Kemper, Mrs. Levi. Ambrose, this is . . . Mrs. Levi . . . she's an old friend. . . .  
**MRS. LEVI:** Mrs. Levi, born Gallagher. Very happy to meet you, Mr. Kemper.

65   **AMBROSE:** Good morning, Mrs. Levi.  
**MRS. LEVI:** Mr. Kemper, *the artist!* Delighted! Mr. Kemper, may I say something very frankly?  
**AMBROSE:** Yes, Mrs. Levi.  
**MRS. LEVI:** This thing you were planning to do is a very great mistake.

70   **ERMENGARDE:** Oh, Mrs. Levi, please explain to Ambrose—*of course!* I want to marry him, but to *elope!* . . . How . . .  
**MRS. LEVI:** Now, my dear girl, you go in and keep one eye on your uncle. I wish to talk to Mr. Kemper for a moment. You give us a warning when you hear your Uncle Horace coming. . . .

75   **ERMENGARDE:** Ye-es, Mrs. Levi. (*Exit Ermengarde back center.*)  
**MRS. LEVI:** Mr. Kemper, I was this dear girl's mother's oldest friend. Believe me, I am on your side. I hope you two will be married very soon, and I think I can be of real service to you. Mr. Kemper, I always go right to the point.  
**AMBROSE:** What is the point, Mrs. Levi?

80   **MRS. LEVI:** Mr. Vandergelder is a very rich man, Mr. Kemper, and Ermengarde is his only relative.  
**AMBROSE:** But I am not interested in Mr. Vandergelder's money. I have enough to support a wife and family.  
**MRS. LEVI:** Enough? How much is enough when one is thinking about children

85   and the future? The future is the most expensive luxury in the world, Mr. Kemper.  
**AMBROSE:** Mrs. Levi, what is the point?  
**MRS. LEVI:** Believe me, Mr. Vandergelder wishes to get rid of Ermengarde, and if you follow my suggestions he will even permit her to marry you. You see, Mr.

90   Vandergelder is planning to get married himself.  
**AMBROSE:** What? That monster!  
**MRS. LEVI:** Mr. Kemper!  
**AMBROSE:** Married! To you, Mrs. Levi?  
**MRS. LEVI** (*Taken aback*): Oh, no, no . . . No! I am merely arranging it. I am helping him find a suitable bride.

95   **AMBROSE:** For Mr. Vandergelder there are no suitable brides.  
**MRS. LEVI:** I think we can safely say that Mr. Vandergelder will be married to someone by the end of next week.

*Continued*

AMBROSE: What are you suggesting, Mrs. Levi?

100 MRS. LEVI: I am taking Ermengarde to New York on the next train. I shall not take her to Miss Van Huysen's, as is planned; I shall take her to my house. I wish you to call for her at my house at five-thirty. Here is my card.

AMBROSE: "Mrs. Dolly Gallagher Levi. Varicose veins reduced."

MRS. LEVI (*Trying to take back card*): I beg your pardon . . .

105 AMBROSE (*Holding card*): I beg *your* pardon. "Consultations free."

MRS. LEVI: I meant to give you my other card. Here.

AMBROSE: "Mrs. Dolly Gallagher Levi. Aurora Hosiery. Instruction in the guitar and mandolin." You do all these things, Mrs. Levi?

MRS. LEVI: Two and two make four, Mr. Kemper—always did. So you will come to my house at five-thirty. At about six I shall take you both with me to the Harmonia Gardens Restaurant on the Battery; Mr. Vandergelder will be there and everything will be arranged.

AMBROSE: How?

MRS. LEVI: Oh, I don't know. One thing will lead to another.

115 AMBROSE: How do I know that I can trust you, Mrs. Levi? You could easily make our situation worse.

MRS. LEVI: Mr. Kemper, your situation could not possibly be worse.

AMBROSE: I wish I knew what you get out of this, Mrs. Levi.

MRS. LEVI: That is a very proper question. I get two things: profit and pleasure.

120 AMBROSE: How?

MRS. LEVI: Mr. Kemper, I am a woman who arranges things. At present I am arranging Mr. Vandergelder's domestic affairs. Out of it I get—shall we call it: little pickings? I need little pickings, Mr. Kemper, and especially just now, when I haven't got my train fare back to New York. You see: I am frank with you.

AMBROSE: That's your profit, Mrs. Levi; but where do you get your pleasure?

MRS. LEVI: My pleasure? Mr. Kemper, when you artists paint a hillside or a river you change everything a little, you make thousands of little changes, don't you? Nature is never completely satisfactory and must be corrected.

130 Well, I'm like you artists. Life as it is is never quite interesting enough for me—I'm bored, Mr. Kemper, with life as it is—and so I do things. I put my hand in here, and I put my hand in there, and I watch and I listen—and often I'm very much amused.

Thornton Wilder  
20th century American playwright

**IV. Questions 27 to 35 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from an article published in 1989.**

**from THE HARD LIFE**

Why is life in Japan so hard? I don't mean hard for me, with my battered dollars, but hard for the Japanese, who have supposedly won the world's economic wars. Japan, as everyone knows, now has the highest per capita income of any country, apart from, perhaps, a couple of oil baronies. Yet few Europeans 5 or North Americans would willingly trade places in daily life with the average Japanese, whose living conditions are cramped, working hours are long, and material rewards and chances for recreation are slight compared with those in the rest of the industrialized world. One friend from New York, on his first visit to Japan, walked through our neighborhood in Yokohama on a sunny day and saw 10 laundry flapping from every window and porch. "You mean no one has dryers?" he asked. "This is how I expected Seoul to look." Japan now has enough money to do anything it wants. Why do rich people keep living this way?

The answer to this question is crucial, because it essentially determines whether the world's trade battles with Japan will ever end. If most Japanese 15 people agree with the outside view—that Japanese life is needlessly hard—then trade imbalances will start working themselves out. The Japanese government may try to keep markets closed, but the people themselves will eventually rebel. They will find ways to buy cheaper imports, they will take more time off, they will get tired of tightening their belts in order to increase world market share. 20 They will complain about, and finally change, the regulations and government-sanctioned cartels that thwart the consumer's interest in Japan. But if, for whatever reason, the Japanese public feels that its material desires have been satisfied, then trade problems might never solve themselves. Japanese workers and consumers will have little incentive to behave the way market theory says 25 they should, by using their ever increasing wealth to live in ever more comfortable style.

My impression is that, unfortunately, the second hypothesis is the correct one: the Japanese public is already quite content, or, more precisely, is not unhappy enough to demand a substantial change. Contentment is a plus for any country, 30 but in this case it practically guarantees continued trade friction. . . .

How, then, can anyone call Japanese life mean or hard? Many Japanese have replied with semi-offended astonishment when I've raised my "low living standards" questions with them; they've taken the very premise of the question as a sneer at what they have achieved. In attempting to explain why it's not a sneer,

*Continued*

35 I've come up with three ways in which this ever more affluent country still seems pointlessly austere.

The first is crowded housing, and daily crowding in general. The typical Japanese dwelling is much smaller, much more expensive, and somewhat worse made than its counterpart in Europe or, especially, the United States. The typical  
40 Japanese also spends more of his day fighting for survival space in unending crowds. The second is purchasing power. Japanese factories make many products very efficiently, and Japanese exports are famous for giving overseas consumers more for their money. When they spend their yen at home, however, Japanese consumers are shortchanged no matter what they buy. The third is leisure. Certain  
45 categories of Japanese—namely, white-collar salarymen and public-school students—have essentially no free time.

The most interesting thing about such “hardships” is the sharply differing conclusions that Japanese and foreign observers draw from them. To me they look like totally unnecessary burdens, and to most outside economists they are all  
50 symptoms of an economy biased toward “underconsumption.” To many Japanese, however, they’re part of the broadly accepted social contract that has allowed the nation to succeed.

The high cost and poor quality of housing are the best-known Japanese problems, and the ones that Japanese themselves are most likely to grumble about.  
55 But the grumbling does not appear to be the kind that would lead to a change in behavior. Most Japanese seem to view the tight quarters and high prices as part of their fate, since they live (in the boiler-plate phrase that I have heard times without number) in a “small island nation lacking natural resources”....

In actuality, a variety of commercial and political forces leave [the Japanese] with very little choice but to live in expensive, inelegant houses on small plots.  
60 Japan’s determination to subsidize its high-cost rice farmers means that tiny, inefficient paddies occupy about a quarter of the nation’s nonmountainous land. Tax laws discourage the sale and development of land, and further inflate the price of any land that reaches the market. The cost of land makes the dwelling itself seem a  
65 trivial, consumable item. In greater Tokyo the value of a house is typically only a tenth of the value of the land it’s built on. This means that many houses are built to be torn down in a decade or two, which discourages heavy investment in sturdiness or finishing touches. One neighborhood near our house exemplifies the modern “Japanese dream”: brand-new single-family homes, tastefully landscaped on a  
70 small scale, many even with carports to hold the meticulously shined Toyotas and BMWs. It would be obvious to any Japanese that these houses represent a tremendous concentration of wealth; a typical house in the neighborhood, with its land, costs several million dollars. Yet most foreigners, passing by, would think

*Continued*

75 the houses attractive but unexceptional. To me, the neighborhood looks like a new development in Silicon Valley<sup>1</sup> with much smaller lots. . . .

Besides the housing shortage, there is the general atmosphere of crowding that throws outsiders like me into a panic and must wear down even people who have been used to it all their lives. Nanjing Road, the main street of Shanghai, is celebrated by the Chinese as an extremely crowded thoroughfare, but to me it can't  
80 compare in claustrophobic density to any of Tokyo's big train stations or major shopping streets. Each morning between 7:15 and 8:45 the platforms at my neighborhood train station are patrolled by "packers," ready to cram extra riders into each passing commuter train. Every train that pulls in is already full, but commuters who need to make a certain train take their places in specific areas on  
85 the platform. As the doors open, the first dozen or so people in each line push their way in under their own power, often entering backward and digging with their heels for extra traction. Then the packers take over and wedge in anyone else in line. Two or three times a week I make the half-hour trip to Tokyo on one of these trains. As I stand with my arms immobilized against my chest, someone's hip  
90 jammed into my groin and odd appendages pressed against my other surfaces, I alternately boil with anger and rejoice that I don't have to undergo this indignity every day. When I get off the train, after giving thanks for my survival and trying to smooth out my jacket and tie, I wonder why no one except foreigners seems to think that a rich country should find a less degrading way for its citizens to get  
95 to work.

My intention is not to examine the roots of Tokyo's housing and crowding problems but simply to say that they're not likely to change. All the remedies would involve making frontal assaults on the strongest interests in Japanese politics: changing the tax laws to encourage residential development, driving out  
100 the rice farmers, moving the central government away from Tokyo. (Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita often talks about moving government offices to the hinterland, but this seems more like a dream than an actual plan.) If ordinary Japanese had more room to live and play in, they might behave more like consumers in the rest of the world. "I can honestly say there's nothing I want that  
105 I don't have," a Japanese journalist friend of mine said one night when we were discussing the Japanese contentment with low living standards. "Oh, come on," said another friend, a professor. "You mean there's nothing you want that will fit in your house." They agreed on one thing: neither will ever have a bigger house.

*James Fallows*  
American journalist

<sup>1</sup>Silicon Valley—region in western California that is a centre for electronics, computing, and database systems

**V. Questions 36 to 44 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a novel.**

**from TENDER MERCIES**

*Dan, the young man in this excerpt, has grown up and lived his life in a town called Hyland in the state of New Hampshire.*

... he smiled at Laura and gratefully made himself quiet.

He began, in fact, to discover the virtues of quietness, the bottomless depths you could suggest for yourself without quite lying. He surprised himself: what was lying and what wasn't? The question opened wide for him, like arms he

5 didn't exactly deserve to rest in. He devoted himself to mastering the signs of her uniqueness: less rather than more, gentleness rather than power; keeping quiet, just reaching out for her, but not demanding. Her hand, barely touching. . . . The distance between their bare arms so infinitesimal it drew the small hairs up like electricity. Admiring without touching—it was an exquisite challenge. . . .

10 He had not come, after all, from a family of gentle men and it took a painful chastening of his impulses to learn subtlety where braggadocio came naturally. (Braggadocio was his high school English teacher's favorite word; she had beat him over the head with it. He loved it, that anything so flamboyant and mysterious and foreign-sounding could be called his natural style; it sounded like a compliment.) . . .

15 She was wearing blue jean shorts; the half-invisible hairs on her thighs, like lights on the water, were silver. . . . She had a slightly flushed, substantial look he thought; not heavy at all but something weighted nearer the bone; maybe she was one of those people who couldn't float. Her thick reddish hair rode all around her neck like a mane, unruly. She kept it in a rubber band but it fanned out anyway. He guessed she'd never been to a beauty shop and what she had for it was lush and inviting, not like his old girls with those thinned-out greased-up gold-streaked piled-on wedding cakes they wore for special occasions and then, when you wanted to most, wouldn't let you mess. There was delicacy and force in her, and 20 that serious listening quality, so that she was very quiet while he talked, she asked him questions and answered his meticulously, just as she sat in her own straightforward way, without coyness. She didn't seem to know or care how the Hyland girls pumped to keep a conversation going, filling in all the blank spaces, playing their desperate background music endlessly like human jukeboxes. Those 25 were the girls his friends had begun to marry and to run from; after a few months they came and stood around with him and the other survivors and holdouts, staring at the floor, trying to be alone in their old familiar company.

*Continued*

By her listening Laura taught him to talk with the expectation that he would be heard. . . .

35 He tried to step backwards to see himself whole, but that wasn't a direction he was used to; there was nothing to do but bungle straight ahead and hope. He didn't ask himself what he was hoping for. Laura had had two years at a college called Wellesley<sup>1</sup> that sounded like a country club with a library instead of a bar: it was hard to imagine the campus she walked on, deep ridges overwhelmed with lush trees in purple flower; the galleries of paintings, the linen-covered tables with gold samovars,<sup>2</sup> behind them, bowing, silent servants in tuxedos. . . .

40 He was, in fact, a young man of ordinary tastes and it seemed hopeless to try to dissimulate with her; she would have found him out. Her philosophy [instructor] liked Heidegger,<sup>3</sup> she told him, and he nodded bleakly, wondering if 45 that was a place or a beer or a sport. What did he like? Tearing up trees on the bush hog. Swimming in heartstopping water. Bobsledding. He liked dogs, all his life he'd put a lot of love into them because they wouldn't laugh or push him away. He liked well-shined shoes; football that's more brains than shoulders; hot pepper sauce; cheeses that don't smell like someone's been sick in the room; all 50 four-wheel-drive vehicles. He had never eaten an artichoke, nor heard a dulcimer.<sup>4</sup> He fell asleep on uplifting music, though he liked to sing, and thought cars should be fast, not solid. The flag of the state of New Hampshire made his stomach sink with a churning excitement, almost a kind of pain, which must have to do with something he'd done as a child: carried the flag? damaged it accidentally and been 55 punished for it? seen it in the V.A.<sup>5</sup> Hospital where his father was dying? He wasn't patriotic, the word would never have occurred to him; why did he feel so unsettled when he saw the high-masted sailing ship against the sun? Once he blew his nose into a silk handkerchief and then and there decided that he would become rich, or wished he could decide: the feeling of luxury where you least expected it, 60 of a private sweetness, meant more than the drape of any suit or even the chrome on a car. He hid this petty preference from his friends who would have thought him a pansy for it. And getting rich was never the point; getting halfway decent might be, if he ever got good and ready for it. He had always thought of himself as someone who got what he wanted: he thought Laura needed to know this, his 65 honor demanded that he warn her so that she might defend herself if she wanted to. As a young boy, the youngest, he could charm his mother, whose experience of grown men had been nothing but mutilating.<sup>6</sup> She would have given him

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>Wellesley—exclusive women's college in Wellesley, Massachusetts

<sup>2</sup>samovars—large, elaborate tea urns

<sup>3</sup>Heidegger—20th century German philosopher

<sup>4</sup>dulcimer—a stringed instrument, the prototype of the piano

<sup>5</sup>V.A.—Veterans' Administration

<sup>6</sup>mutilating—destructive

70 permission to take the world but all she had of it was what he could find in her worn brown change purse. . . . She worked nights at the paper mill all his life, all hers; she slept most of the day.

At school he kept a balance of terror, benign but effective: the annual lecture to the Society of Future Felons of N.H. was directed at his truculent head by Mrs. Hurley, principal. . . . He was smarter than his friends, played the odds, used his smooth face and eager goodboy looks, the persistent near-smile, the reassuring firm jaw, something clean about him that had to do with a soul that was subsisting on hope faintly warmed by his mother's love, and not with fastidiousness—something of this combination got him behind closed doors, dispersed his enemies, helped him to escape continuous punishment. There had been plenty of need for absolution and escape: he wasn't mean but he'd always been sloppy, had had a childhood, in close quarters, of breaking things, vases and bicycles, and once the top drawer of the only decent piece of furniture they owned. . . . and breaking hearts, that too. But there was some glamor in him, some obscure enviable energy that made his arrogance only appropriate; didn't he deserve, by taking them, the things he got?

85 At the worst his friends and he were vandals, irritating as the black flies that came in their season. What trouble and confusion they made was never intolerable. Hyland bored them; they had known each other, known the two main streets that met at a T and the leafy roads and old wooden stores forever: in another life. To keep their hands busy, their adrenalin in working order, they

90 broke into summer homes and hunting camps. Once inside, the conversation was always the same: "Hey look at this!" to signify the discovery of anything worth ten dollars, and "Boy, you got to figure they've got another whole set of this stuff back home, right?" Dan's resentment was real; he never stopped being angry at the summer people and their endless duplications: his mother had patched

95 together a set of china with one representative of every species of flower around the border. Even if the chipped plates in these strangers' kitchens came from the Ladies Auxiliary Thrift Shop he was angry; it was excessive. He and his friends would leave by the windows, would take the highways at unconscionable speed, occasionally in someone else's car. ("Danny's gonna jump-start his hearse,"

100 somebody once said.) They were all known to the cops, as the cops, and the cops' imperfect pasts, were known to them. But they were amateurs, every one of them; in spite of their noise and their showy toughness, small-town punks who didn't *need* weren't desperate. This was all braggadocio, that ticklish word: blood made the difference. But they had no blood guilt. They were puppies growing into their feet.

*Rosellen Brown*  
American writer

**VI. Questions 45 to 53 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a play.**

**from The History of TROILUS AND CRESSIDA, ACT III, scene iii**

CHARACTERS:

ACHILLES—Greek commander

ULYSSES—Greek commander

Scene: The Greek camp near the city of Troy, during the Trojan war.

*ACHILLES, Greek champion, has recently chosen to indulge his personal whims and not participate in the ongoing battle. ACHILLES has just been snubbed by his fellow chieftains, causing him to reflect on the possibility of his falling out of their favour. Believing that he can speak freely to ULYSSES, ACHILLES proceeds thus:*

ACHILLES: Here is Ulysses;

I'll interrupt his reading.

How now, Ulysses.

ULYSSES: Now, great Thetis<sup>1</sup>' son.

5     ACHILLES: What are you reading?

ULYSSES: A strange fellow here

Writes me that man, how dearly ever parted,

How much in having, or without or in,

Cannot make boast to have that which he hath,

10    Nor feels not what he owes<sup>2</sup> but by reflection;

As when his virtues aiming upon others

Heat them, and they retort that heat again

To the first giver.

ACHILLES: This is not strange, Ulysses.

15    The beauty that is borne here in the face

The bearer knows not, but commends itself

To others' eyes; nor doth the eye itself,

That most pure spirit of sense, behold itself,

Not going from itself; but eye to eye opposed

20    Salutes each other with each other's form;

For speculation turns not to itself

Till it hath travelled and is married there

Where it may see itself. This is not strange at all.

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>Thetis—the sea nymph in Greek mythology who was the mother of Achilles. His father was a Thessalian king

<sup>2</sup>owes—owns

ULYSSES: I do not strain at the position,  
25 It is familiar, but at the author's drift;  
Who in his circumstance expressly proves  
That no man is the lord of anything—  
Though in and of him there be much consisting—  
Till he communicate his parts to others;  
30 Nor doth he of himself know them for aught  
Till he behold them formèd in th' applause  
Where the' are extended; who, like an arch, reverb'rate  
The voice again, or, like a gate of steel  
Fronting the sun, receives and renders back  
35 His figure and his heat. I was much rapt in this,  
And apprehended here immediately  
Th' unknown Ajax.<sup>3</sup>  
Heavens, what a man is there! A very horse,  
That has he knows not what. Nature, what things there are  
40 Most abject in regard and dear in use!  
What things again most dear in the esteem  
And poor in worth! Now shall we see to-morrow,  
An act that very chance doth throw upon him,  
Ajax renowned. O heavens, what some men do,  
45 While some men leave to do!  
How some men creep into skittish Fortune's hall,  
Whiles others play the idiots in her eyes!  
How one man eats into another's pride,  
While pride is fasting in his wantonness!  
50 To see these Grecian lords—why, even already  
They clap the lubber<sup>4</sup> Ajax on the shoulder,  
As if his foot were on brave Hector's<sup>5</sup> breast,  
And great Troy shrinking.

ACHILLES: I do believe it; for they passed by me  
55 As misers do by beggars, neither gave to me  
Good word nor look. What, are my deeds forgot?

ULYSSES: Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,  
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,  
A great-sized monster of ingratitudes.  
60 Those scraps are good deeds past, which are devoured

*Continued*

<sup>3</sup>Ajax—one of the Greek commanders

<sup>4</sup>lubber—awkward

<sup>5</sup>Hector—the Trojan champion, son of Priam, who is the King of Troy

As fast as they are made, forgot as soon  
As done. Perseverance, dear my lord,  
Keeps honor bright; to have done, is to hang  
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail

65      In monumental mock'ry. Take the instant way;  
For honor travels in a strait so narrow  
Where one but goes abreast. Keep, then, the path;  
For emulation hath a thousand sons  
That one by one pursue. If you give way,  
70      Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,  
Like to an ent'red tide they all rush by  
And leave you hindmost;  
[Or, like a gallant horse fall'n in first rank,  
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,  
75      O'errun and trampled on.] Then what they do in present,  
Though less than yours in past, must o'ertop yours;  
For time is like a fashionable host,  
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the' hand,  
80      And with his arms outstretched, as he would fly,  
Grasps in the comer. The welcome ever smiles,  
And farewell goes out sighing. Let not virtue seek  
Remuneration for the thing it was. For beauty, wit,  
High birth, vigor of bone, desert in service,  
85      Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all  
To envious and calumniating time.  
One touch of nature<sup>6</sup> makes the whole world kin,  
That all with one consent praise new-born gawds,  
Though they are made and moulded of things past,  
And give to dust that is a little gilt  
90      More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.  
The present eye praises the present object.  
Then marvel not, thou great and complete man,  
That all the Greeks begin to worship Ajax;  
Since things in motion sooner catch the eye  
95      Than what not stirs. The cry went once on thee,  
And still it might, and yet it may again,  
If thou wouldst not entomb thyself alive  
And case thy reputation in thy tent;

*Continued*

<sup>6</sup>One touch of nature—one common weakness

Whose glorious deeds, but in these fields of late,  
100 Made emulous missions 'mongst the gods themselves  
And drove great Mars to faction.<sup>7</sup>

**ACHILLES:** Of this my privacy  
I have strong reasons.

**ULYSSES:** But 'gainst your privacy  
105 The reasons are more potent and heroical.  
'Tis known, Achilles, that you are in love  
With one of Priam's daughters.<sup>8</sup>

**ACHILLES:** Ha! known!

**ULYSSES:** Is that a wonder?  
110 The providence<sup>9</sup> that's in a watchful state  
Knows almost every grain of Pluto's gold,<sup>10</sup>  
Finds bottom in th' uncomprehensive deeps,  
Keeps place with thought, and almost, like the gods,  
Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles.

115 There is a mystery—with whom relation<sup>11</sup>  
Durst never meddle—in the soul of state,  
Which hath an operation more divine  
Than breath or pen can give expressure to.  
All the commerce that you have had with Troy

120 As perfectly is ours as yours, my lord;  
And better would it fit Achilles much  
To throw down Hector than Polyxena  
But it must grieve young Pyrrhus<sup>12</sup> now at home,  
When fame shall in our islands sound her trump,

125 And all the Greekish girls shall tripping sing,  
“Great Hector's sister did Achilles win,  
But our great Ajax bravely beat down him.”  
Farewell, my lord; I as your lover speak;  
The fool slides o'er the ice that you should break.

(Exit.)

*William Shakespeare*

<sup>7</sup>drove great Mars to faction—inspired the support of Mars, god of war

<sup>8</sup>one of Priam's daughters—Polyxena

<sup>9</sup>providence—here, timely care rather than foresight

<sup>10</sup>Pluto's gold—the author has confused Pluto, god of the underworld, with Plutus, god of wealth

<sup>11</sup>relation—open statement

<sup>12</sup>Pyrrhus—son of Achilles

**VII. Questions 54 to 61 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from an essay.**

**from DANCE AT SANTO DOMINGO**

The moment the engine was switched off we could hear the drum. I was delighted, for we had come out to Santo Domingo with no more than a good hope of finding a dance in progress; the possibility of it had been whispered in my ear at the New Mexico Museum of anthropology, but, it was insisted, the news was both secret 5 and uncertain. Now, however, there was no doubt; even in the distant corner of the village where we were parking our car the drum-beat dominated the bright sunny air relentlessly.

I was delighted, yet as we walked between the low houses towards the plaza, I also felt ashamed; yes, just a little ashamed. The Indians do not care for whites to 10 attend some of their more purposeful dances and I am in complete sympathy with them: the moment a ceremony becomes a spectacle for gapers some of the good goes out of it. Yet when I heard of this one by the anthropologists' bush telegraph, I could not resist the lure, being too greedy of the experience. It was understandable. I had given a fair part of my life to prehistory, and here was my first chance to see a 15 primitive people, miraculously saved for us out of the prehistoric past, performing such rites as I had often tried to imagine when confronted by their poor, lifeless remains. I had taken seriously the secrecy of my information; I had left behind my camera; I would try to enter imaginatively into the ceremony and not merely to observe it. These were the sops<sup>1</sup> I threw to my conscience as we approached the 20 plaza, our steps affected by the loudening drum. . . .

I began to distinguish the larger pattern of the dance. The lines of men and women seemed to repeat the same series of joining and partings four times, and at the end of each movement the men raised and lowered their rattles with a fierce vibration that made a dying fall, a weird yet heart-affecting sound which is said to 25 symbolize the fall of raindrops. After each movement the leaders, the dancers, the drummer and chanters all advanced several yards down the plaza before renewing the fourfold pattern of the dance. It was indeed a pattern of four times four; when the movements had been repeated for this number of times the drumming and chanting were worked up to an intense though never wild crescendo, and the final 30 dying fall of the rattles was louder, more rending than before. Then the four lines of men and women fell into a single column which wound out of the plaza through one of the gaps between the houses and turned into the doorway of a two-storey house on the alleyway beyond. As the whole company tripped, still softly dancing, into so small a space, it seemed a miracle that the walls did not fall outwards; yet after the

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>sops—appeasements

35 last chanter had entered, the sound of the drum and a glimpse through the doorway of moving head-dresses showed that the dance was being continued within. Soon the sense of confined activity, energy and heat, was like that of a wasp's nest humming below ground.

40 After a spell inside the house the compact mass reshaped itself into a column, and returned along the same route back to the plaza where the pattern of four times four was to be repeated; probably, though I am not certain, the whole dance would be complete when this largest pattern had itself been re-enacted four times. Some western people find this monotonous repetition unbearable; if they do, perhaps it is because they cannot rid themselves of the idea that a dance must be either a spectacle  
45 or an entertainment. Instead, these Pueblo dances are enactments, celebrations, no more to be censured for monotony than the perpetual celebration of the Catholic Mass.

One small but most happy change I did notice when the lines re-formed: a small girl and boy had now taken their place at the lower end. Both wore clothes  
50 identical in every detail with those of their elders and performed the steps and movements with equal perfection; indeed, the little boy in his eagerness and pride seemed even to outdo them in exactness and force. From afar the two miniature figures, their heads reaching only up to the waists of their companions, had the appearance of animated dolls drawn into the human dance. It was a glad as well as  
55 an enchanting sight, for it meant that an intricate ritual which had passed from generation to generation through the centuries was to reach yet another. In twenty years' time, it was possible to hope, these dolls might be leading the same dance in the plaza of Santo Domingo, maintaining at least one of those unique forms, peculiar to their own place, which are now fading so fast and leaving us so much the poorer.

60 The presence of these children, moreover, added a time factor to the all-inness, the pervading unity, which was what stirred me most in the performance of this November ritual. The participation of the new generation recalled the old, suggesting the aged men and women who had led these lines (perhaps even now in the mind of the grandfather on the kiva<sup>2</sup> roof) and all their forebears stretching back  
65 into the prehistoric past. The dance itself had not greatly moved me, except to admiration; only the strange outcry of the rattles had taken possession of my feelings. But I was much affected by the sense of wholeness which dominated the arena where these men and women danced and sang before the intent eyes of their fellows. They danced for themselves and for the well-being of the village, they  
70 danced for the animals whose pelts they carried, they danced for the cloud expressed by the soft feathers, for the rain repeated by the rattles and by the swinging fringes of their sashes; they danced for the treasure of the earth shown forth in turquoise and silver, and, containing all, they danced for the enduring life of which the spruce

*Continued*

<sup>2</sup>kiva—in a Pueblo Indian dwelling, a large room used for religious ceremonies and councils

twigs were the symbol. The words of the chant, the rhythm of the drum, every step  
75 the dancers trod and every pattern, colour and form of their accoutrement, spun out a  
maze of threads linking the actors with sun, cloud and earth, with village and fields  
and orchards, with one another and their ancestors and descendants. And all the  
threads wove together to make a picture of their desire for well-being and  
continuance. No one will ever be able to express this universal participation in  
80 words, for it is essentially a wordless thing. Yet even the outsider, the visitor, can  
share in it a little as he stands in this earthen place, enclosed by houses and a ring of  
eyes, watching it expressed in the being of the dancers and their dance.

Does reason say these rites are useless, the enactments of delusions? No dance  
has ever caused seeds to germinate, rain fall, corn swell and ripen or the sun turn  
85 back. They are embodiments of the images of the psyche and cannot affect the  
physical world without. Yet undoubtedly as they spring from the psyche so they  
also satisfy it, embodying the promptings of the unconscious mind and the  
imagination. So celebration of such rites invigorates, brings confidence and wards  
off mental ills; it suffuses with meaning a crowd of daily acts related to its purposes.  
90 It satisfies that terrible longing to do something to bring the desired to pass, when  
nothing can be done with hands.

These are reasons, justifications for a ritual which perhaps needs no justification  
beyond the fullness of its own existence. Yet in a sense it is already ahead of reason,  
having never left a position to which reason itself now returns. The dances express  
95 in the language of poetry the truth of man's unity with nature, the truth that science  
repeats to us, curing our delusions of grandeur. Yet because of their poetry they  
offer us visions for which science has no eyes. . . .

As we returned to our car the drum was beating again just as it had been when  
we arrived. Probably it would go on for hours yet, and afterwards there would be  
100 feasting. I felt curiously limp and emptied out as though following the dance had  
taxed me more than I knew. But the next morning when I woke my memories had  
revived their colours, and as I examined them it seemed to me they offered some  
understanding of the ancient tribal life of my kind. Of life, as some would have it,  
before the Fall.<sup>3</sup>

*J.B. Priestley and J. Hawkes*  
American writers

<sup>3</sup>the Fall—humanity's loss of innocence through its quest for knowledge or the power that knowledge provides

VIII. Questions 62 to 70 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

### THE STONES

Tell the other side of it, how longing  
galloped beside terror in your chest  
when trees stopped and fog reached between the mountains  
and hid the painted stripes that marked the path.

5 It started to get dark and cold and nothing  
you could see would burn to warm a night,  
and inside, next to fear, over the borders  
you'd drawn for safety, leaped a wild wish—  
  
to stay where there was no sign of the human,  
10 forget your bootprints in a gash of snow,  
leave the red trail blazes and the cairns<sup>1</sup>  
pointing to the cramped shelter below  
  
for forms you couldn't make resemble faces:  
endless streambeds paved with shifting scree,<sup>2</sup>  
15 clouds of insects, gentians<sup>3</sup> pushed through fissures,  
butterflies, rills<sup>4</sup> broken over stones,  
  
the stones themselves. How could they be persuaded  
to accept you as an integer, like them:  
taught the measurement of time in eras,  
20 infinite, no longer lost or small?  
  
Language was as useless as your eyes  
until the fog blew higher and withdrew,  
and the ancient pools left by the glaciers  
looked like postcards again as you climbed down.

*Suzanne Gardinier*  
British poet

<sup>1</sup>cairns—stones piled as a landmark

<sup>2</sup>scree—loose shale; rocky debris

<sup>3</sup>gentians—bright blue-flowered plants

<sup>4</sup>rills—small streams

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*English 30: Part B*

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